

Complex world. Thoughtful church.



**Clockwise from top left:** A year in review... LAST year's Advent crafts with Morgan; lots of love for as we said goodbye and thank you to Elise Carlson; February's stunning Night Songs program; some of the bread baking team; spring garbage pick-up; advocating at the state capitol; pizza making in support of the service learning trip to San Lucas Toliman mission in Guatemala; taking a break on the St. Croix River; summer day camp – Building a Beloved Community; a fantastic courtyard concert; outdoor worship; a rooftop solar panel tour during the Welcome Back Students event; pumpkin carving; (center) Tim Abrahamson working on the southwest doors (the “Dumpster Doors”) as part of the Opening Doors Capital Appeal – these doors are getting a new oak “skin” and lots of needed care, they will be back in use in the coming weeks!



## Come, God of Daybreak + God of Shadows

I'm a daily walker and a sometimes runner. Often our dog is at my side. Sometimes my spouse Jane joins me. Occasionally I have the pleasure of walking with some of you. At this time of year, a lot of my walking and my running seems to happen in the dark hours, or on the cusp of these hours. I'm out as the morning light is just beginning to appear, or as the evening [read late afternoon, er afternoon!] shadows grow darker.

Sometimes my headlamp lights the way, or a nifty lighted dog collar I slip around Ace's neck. More often I walk in the dark, attuning my ears and other senses in the darkest spots, seeking at once physical safety and spiritual peace. All this gives me ample time to ponder the rich variations of light and darkness – golden yellows and rosy pinks, reds and oranges, every possible shade of blue and gray, and steely nearly bluey-black. While my brain, or stomach, or tired body/heart/mind/eyes might know the time of day, I've noticed that sometimes *visually* I can't tell the difference between the morning light that's coming and the evening light that's fading.

Advent is on my mind. Advent is the season of preparation for the coming of Christ. Often we focus on the coming of Jesus as a babe born in Bethlehem (think preparation for Christmas). But classically, the other "advents" this season are the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ (think end-times), and the way that God daily enters our lives, our hearts, our community and world.

Our Advent theme is adapted from a snippet of Holden Evening Prayer: **Come, God of Daybreak + God of Shadows**. Musing about the variation of darkness and light frees us to look beyond the binaries of day and night, light and darkness, goodness and evil. Through history, these binaries have consciously and sub consciously shaped our thinking about race, etched our culture, and perpetuated harm. Instead of the binaries, I'm noticing the variations in the colors and brightness. I'm wondering what blessings the morning holds and what beauty the night brings. I'm curious what hope we cling to, what love we seek, and how Jesus will enter in *this* season. I'm teetering on the edge, the cusp, feeling the shifting beneath my feet, practicing balance on this edge, stumbling, and again righting myself. I'm grieving with a world gone mad and the layers of sorrow we each carry, rejoicing in the surprising joy in our midst, and at once trusting Christ's presence now and in the days ahead. **Come, God of Daybreak + God of Shadows. Come into our hearts, come into our world.**

This Advent join us for evening services (Wednesdays, 7 p.m., Chapel) and Sunday worship (10:30 a.m., Sanctuary/ Zoom/ YouTube), and Christmas Eve worship (4 p.m., Sanctuary/YouTube, possibly Zoom). During worship, watch for special opportunities for community art and prayer. I'm thankful for the dedicated folks who enrich our worship life through art, music, technology, and the details of preparation. Here are some highlights for each week:

December 3 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent, Bach Cantata, New Member Welcome.

December 10 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent, Sing with the Choir Sunday, a Thank you to our Donation Listening Team.

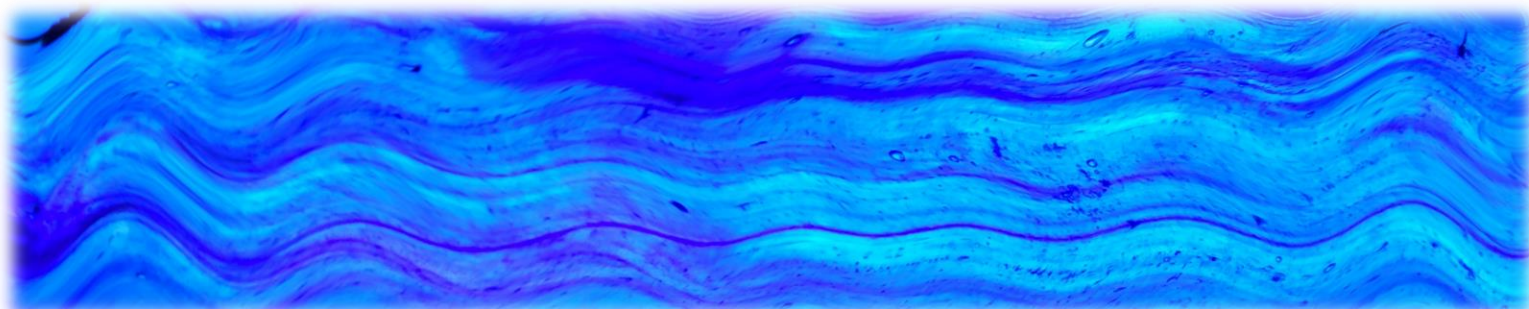
December 17 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent, Intergenerational Lessons and Carols, Advent Smorgasbord Potluck, Caroling.

December 24 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent, a simple 10:30 a.m. service.

December 24 – Christmas Eve Service at 4 p.m., with an extended prelude prior.

As we await Jesus' way of love and justice, I give thanks for you, for your honest faithfulness, and for your commitment to this community of Christ. Come, God of Daybreak + God of Shadows, come into our hearts anew.

Rev. Jen Nagel, Lead Pastor



This lovely variegated blue is part of the stained glass at ULCH. Can you find it?!  
Thanks to our Church Administrator Nathan Obrestad who points us to this beauty.

# Worship and Music

**Evening Advent Services** will return in December, featuring Marty Haugen's Holden Evening Prayer. Join for worship on December 6, 13, and 20 at 7:00 p.m.

**The choir season is underway!** Join us for rehearsals Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. We sing a wide variety of music from around the world and across the centuries, and rehearse in a way that allows everyone to feel comfortable and ready to sing on choir Sundays. Come as you are! Can't come every week? No problem, come rehearse with us when you can! Bring a friend!

**Sing with the Choir:** Sing with the Choir Sundays have returned this fall, giving anyone who can't make a weekly evening commitment a chance to swing by for a Sunday morning choir rehearsal and learn something straightforward for the service. The remaining opportunity this fall is Sunday, December 10.

**Music Series Concert Dec. 12, 2023, 7:30 p.m.:** Former Minnesota Orchestra members Barbara Leibundguth, flautist, and Basil Reeve, oboist, join pianist Robert Ragoonanan for a beautiful evening of music for flute, oboe, and piano, featuring pieces by Alec Templeton, Eugene Goossens, Johann Joachim Quantz, Benjamin Britten, and more!

**Christmas Eve Prelude Volunteers Wanted!** Last year, to great success, we had an extended prelude featuring musicians from our Hope community, young and old, sharing their gifts prior to worship. It would be wonderful to do this again! If you play an instrument or sing and would like to share music during an extended prelude to our 4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve worship service, please contact Robert Ragoonanan at [robertr@ulch.org](mailto:robertr@ulch.org). All ages and skill levels welcome!

**Mark your calendars for Night Songs!** Feb. 9, 2024, 7:30 p.m.: Night Songs, a multimedia choral and instrumental concert, returns! Join The Hope Choir, the First Congregational Church of Minnesota Choir, The University Baptist Church Choir, the Grace University Lutheran Choir, and the Vocal U a Capella Choir, as well as other MSP singers and instrumentalists for a program of music and poetry, paired with astounding images of space and our planet curated by Dr. James Flaten, Assoc. Dir. of NASA's MN Space Grant Consortium.

**Soloists and ensembles for worship are welcome!** If you play an instrument or sing and would like to offer a piece of music in worship, please let me know! Our congregation has many musicians of all ages, and all are welcome to share their gifts. All are welcome, anytime.

Robert S. Ragoonanan, Minister of Worship and Music



## 2024 Bach Seminar

The latest and greatest music of Johann Sebastian Bach will be featured at the 2024 BACH SEMINAR: Mass in B Minor and The Art of Fugue. Beginning January 9, Rev. John Setterlund and Prof. Paul Westermeyer will lead the six Tuesday evening sessions, 6:30-8:30. The Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, Roseville, will host the SEMINAR. Anyone interested in this wonderful music is urged to attend—listen, study, discuss! A \$20 fee for the series is payable at arrival. Contact John S. for further details (217-828-1038).

## Plymouth Christian Youth Center Children's Gift Bazar

Share the gift of giving with a child. Bring new unwrapped items to church by December 3, 2023. Gifts for all ages and genders need for the Plymouth Christian Youth Center Children's Gift Bazaar. Monetary gifts are also accepted. See Gretchen Peik for questions.

## December Fellowship Meal

Come join us for our **potluck/smorgasbord** meal on Dec. 17th following the lessons and carols service. Meatballs, potatoes and gravy will be provided. Please bring an item to add to the table (main dish, vegetables, fruit, salad, dessert...). Help with set up and clean up are needed and appreciated. Questions, contact Becky Halvorson at [halvorson.becky@gmail.com](mailto:halvorson.becky@gmail.com) or 612-382-5740.

## Children's Ministry Updates

We are looking forward to beginning a new liturgical season in Sunday School this Advent. We'll learn the story of Elizabeth and Mary, we'll experience a Godly Play story about the Holy Family, and we'll spend some time getting ready to help lead worship for the Intergenerational Lessons and Carols service on Sunday, December 17. It will be a fun season together.

There is no Sunday School on December 24th or 31st. We will gather again in the new year on January 7th.

The nursery will continue to be open on Sunday mornings beginning at 9:30 a.m. for our youngest children and their families each Sunday.

Contact Pr. Maria if you have any questions, concerns, or would like to be on our email list! ([mariaa@ulch.org](mailto:mariaa@ulch.org))



Pastor Maria Anderson-Lippert

## Youth Group and Confirmation

In November we held a youth lock-in with 13 kids in attendance, including some of the youth from University Lutheran Church of Hope, and some of their friends. During the lock-in we got to know each other better, played games around the church, had an outdoor campfire and discussion in the courtyard, lit candles and had deep talks in the chapel, made prayer shawls, watched movies and generally goofed around. A success! Watch for information about more events to come.

Our group is still deciding if there is interest in attending the ELCA Youth Gathering this summer (July 2024) in New Orleans, or if another Amnicon trip is our goal.

Also, five 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade youth are beginning Confirmation Class. This new confirmation class includes: Bim R., Kai O., Juna E., Sophia S., and Alex C.. Please include them in your prayers. Monthly Mini Retreats are our pattern.

Questions about youth activities or confirmation? Talk with Pastor Jen ([jenn@ulch.org](mailto:jenn@ulch.org)) or M'taleni Nashandi

## Godly Play Invitation

Godly Play is a Children's Education model that "makes meaning through story, wonder, and play. Nurturing the spiritual lives by honoring the centrality, competency, and capacity of children." This is a model we have used in the past and would like to bring it back more regularly! We have the opportunity in the new year to train a handful of people from Hope to become Godly Play teachers for us here at Hope. If you have any interest, please reach out to Pastor Maria. More information to come.

Pastor Maria Anderson-Lippert

## Hope Birthdays

This birthday list includes Hope's members and friends who are 80 years and older, in addition to some who may be home-bound, residing in assisted living, or a care center. You can find their contact information in the ULCH directory. Cards, notes, and phone calls are always appreciated.

### December Birthdays

December 01—Shuzo Murakami  
December 15—Julie Johnson  
December 16—Judith Ranheim  
December 17—Jeanette Halti

### January Birthdays

January 01—John Setterlund  
January 02—Millie Caspersen  
January 04—Sandy Robinson  
January 19—Susan Scherer  
January 22—Karen Johnson

## Sunday Forums

Forums take place in Heritage Hall on Sunday mornings from 9:30 to 10:20. They can also usually be viewed live on Zoom. Look for the link in the Sunday morning email. You can also catch up on missed opportunities via the links in the Thursday Epistle. Please join us for a time of learning and growing together!

**Dec. 3rd— Why a Bach Cantata in December?** The Hope Choir and instrumentalists will be providing the music of Bach's Cantata 61 as part of the worship service on this day. Paul Westermeyer, professor emeritus of Church Music at Luther Seminary, will provide historical and liturgical background about Bach and his cantata *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland* which he wrote for the first Sunday in Advent. Walk into worship with a greater appreciation of this great musical treasure!

**Dec. 10th— Where Did That Christmas Carol Come From? Part 3** In what has become a new tradition here, several Hope members will share the backstories of some of our most beloved Christmas carols. Who wrote them, when, and why? New this year: We'll sing a verse or two of each carol around the piano. Following the forum, we'll enjoy coffee and holiday cookies. Don't miss it!

**Dec. 17th— No forum today. Stay after worship for the potluck lunch.**

**Dec. 24th— No forum today. Christmas Eve.**

## Welcome, New Members!

On December 3, 2023 we will welcome New Members to the University Lutheran Church of Hope community. This new group includes:

**Willians Santana**  
**Ethan Prince and Jaclyn Hawkins**  
**Tomi and Dan McLellan**

**Joy Lintelman and Rick Chapman**  
**Jessica Kerntop**  
**Nadene Watson**

Please welcome them warmly as we get to know one another in Christ!

## It's Gratitude and Generosity Time

In mid-November we received and blessed Gratitude and Generosity commitments for the coming year. Thanks to all those who have brought in or sent in a Gratitude and Generosity pledge card. If you haven't yet had a chance to consider your pledge for the coming year, please do. This helps our leaders faithfully plan for ministry in 2024. Pledges can be brought to church (additional pledge cards available) or they can be made online via our website.

If you have questions about your pledge or giving (for the annual fund or the capital campaign) talk with Church Administrator Nathan Obrestad ([nathano@ulch.org](mailto:nathano@ulch.org), 612-331-5988). The current capital campaign concludes January 31, 2024 so this is a good time to complete pledges. With deep gratitude, and trust in God's Overflowing Grace!



## Capital Appeal

The planning and work for the next ULCH Capital Appeal is well underway. The Capital Appeal will be named "Opening Doors 2" and will seek funds to support our mortgage payments for the next three years beginning in February of 2024 (enabling the mortgage to be paid off early in 2027). The Vision and Governance Board has designated additional funds to be used for improvements in the main kitchen and the lounge kitchen; courtyard improvements; fellowship hall improvements and the repair and refurbishment of the grand piano in the sanctuary. 7% of the funds will be used to make gifts to the larger community. Look for more information in January.

Please contact Ben Hartmann or Erik Strand with any questions about the appeal.

## Hope Diamonds

Our most senior members will gather on Wednesday, December 20th from 12:30-2 p.m. for a simple soup lunch and festive Christmas celebration! After we eat, we'll share some Christmas cookies and sing carols together. All are welcome. Contact Pr. Maria ([mariaa@ulch.org](mailto:mariaa@ulch.org)) with questions.



## From Pastor Kate and Lutheran Campus Ministry

Dear People of Hope,

I'm writing to say a special thank you for your generosity over the years, and for the ways you've increased that generosity in 2023. In the last year, we've experienced a significant decrease in institutional support (most significantly the U of M, but also the Lilly Foundation, and a small cut from Minneapolis Area Synod), and we have experienced congregational partners stepping into the gap in ways that are very moving. University Lutheran Church of Hope is among those that have stepped into the gap, and we are so grateful.

Because of the ways you've shared, both from budgeted gifts and your Trust, we are able to support so much amazing ministry as we work towards a more sustainable financial future. Because of you, we are able to host a free meal that feeds close to 100 students each week. We are able to be present on campus in public ways, bearing witness to the grace and mercy of Christ in creative and life affirming ways. We are able to host conversations at the intersections of faith and life. I am confident the church and world are better for it!

Again, I'm so grateful for what your generosity has made possible, especially as it's partnered with increased generosity from individuals and congregations across the Twin Cities. On behalf of our board, and the students who we serve, thank you.

Pastor Kate Reuer Welton, Lutheran Campus Ministry

## Gather in December



Gather is a ministry for young adults in the Twin Cities - a place for those who are hungry for community and connection with other young adults in the metro area. Setting the table for connection and rest through worship, meals, and monthly events. Helping young adults deepen in faith as they discover their identity, uncover their vocation and develop as leaders who do justice in the world. Gather is LGBTQI+ affirming and eagerly invites siblings of any sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression into full leadership and participation. Follow our Facebook and Instagram pages for more information @gathertwincities University Lutheran Church of Hope, Grace University Lutheran Church, and St. Anthony Park Lutheran

Church, along with Lutheran Campus Ministry, are pillars in supporting the outward facing ministry of Gather Twin Cities

The December Gather event is on December 17 at 7 p.m. at Grace University Lutheran Church and includes ice cream and social justice. More details to come!

## Hope Book Club

**Sunday, December 10, 2023, 7 p.m. via Zoom**

***Summer Light, and Then Comes the Night***, by Jon Kalman Stefánsson. "A wistful and whimsical novel looking at life in a tiny Icelandic village. Stefánsson's characters and their desperate, striving lives are colorful and ridiculous, tragic and inspiring, but the sleepy unnamed village about two hours north of Reykjavík unites them, for better or worse." [www.startribune.com](http://www.startribune.com)

**January 14: *Love in the Time of Cholera***, by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. [We decided to go from Iceland to Columbia for January!] "[Florantino] allowed himself to be swayed by his conviction that human beings are not born once and for all on the day their mothers give birth to them, but that life obliges them over and over again to give birth to themselves."

Please contact Sonja Peterson at [speterson@dunnwald.com](mailto:speterson@dunnwald.com) or 612-242-8711 with book suggestions or for a link to the meeting.

## Have you visited the library at Hope recently? Please do!

Are there titles you'd like to suggest be added to University Lutheran Church of Hope's library? Great books that are important to faithful living? Share your suggestions by placing a note in the folder on the door of the church library, or sending them to [john.setterlund@gmail.com](mailto:john.setterlund@gmail.com).

Also, if you'd like to be more involved with the Hope library, cataloging, organizing, inviting others, sharing books, we welcome you! Talk with John Setterlund or Jo Schroeder.

## Chicken Update

In the spring of 2020, right after lockdown, we acquired four baby chicks. Covid chickens. Some of you will remember that, during my term as president of the congregation in 2021, my monthly Visitor articles were often inspired by these backyard hen layers.

We got four during Covid, two are left. Martina passed away during my term as president, and it threw the flock out of sorts, prompting many thoughts in the Visitor. After three mostly peaceful years, this summer Copper, our spunky and beautiful Rhode Island Red, injured her hip and had to be put down.

Beth and I took stock of all the effort and time we put into chicken care, and concluded that two were not enough. Thus Checkers, Bluebell, and Goldy came to our home. Alas, Checkers died young, but the two others are thriving. (As they say, “if you have livestock, you will have deadstock.”)

Recently, I reexamined the changes my nonprofit Midwest Food Connection underwent during Covid. My team made several important adjustments as we reacted to the constant change in the world around us. Now in 2023 some of the old routines are back, but the organization does not look like it did before. Not even close.

You perhaps notice that at your workplaces, in your homes, and even at University Lutheran Church of Hope. The marks of our struggles during Covid are still with us. Yet much new has begun.

The clear coming together of old and new in my backyard is reassuring. Maggie and Molly, the survivors, strong and feisty are a reminder of the pandemic, of how Beth, our sons Lukas and Alexander, and I were isolated together at home and searched for new meanings to life.

Right alongside the two elders are the two young hens. New life, part of the beauty of what has come to us since the worst of the pandemic ended. The creative powers of God evident in chickens—and of course in all of us!

Uli Koester

## Life Events at Hope

We’re a community called to hold one another in prayer in every season—in our deepest need and grief, and in our experiences of new life. Here are a few of the life events affecting our community. We need your help to know for what we can pray. Please alert a pastor or contact the church office. We include in prayer...

**Welcoming children and Baptisms**—We pray for all who await and welcome children through joyful and challenging times, including Linnea and Cesar Becerra, and Mira, who on November 26<sup>th</sup> welcomed another little one into their family.

**Marriages**—We pray for all those preparing for marriage, and for all relationships of commitment.

**Deaths**—We pray for God’s strong embrace for all who grieve deaths and losses, those that are recent and those that were many years ago and whose memories fill us, including Robert Ragoonanan and family, at the death of Robert’s father Roland; and Sue and Tom Hanson and family, at the death of Sue’s brother Richard “Rex” Harrison.

**Significant Illness**—We pray for those living with illness, cancer, recovery, uncertain diagnosis, hospice, chemical dependency and other addictions, and mental health struggles, including Marge Perko (in hospice care), Jeanette Haltli (in hospice care), Ken Lundquist (in hospice care), Patrick Colombe, Arloene Stevens, Miriam Hougen, Janet Carpenter, and Chuck Lewis. We also pray for caregivers.

**Separation, divorce, retirement, moves, graduations, new beginnings, and the civil rights movement of our time.**

## Bible and Brews

Exactly what it sounds like...bring your Bible, your favorite brewed beverage, and a penchant for laid-back but totally engaging conversations about faith, scripture, and current events. We meet the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month from 6:30pm to 8:00 p.m. Watch the Thursday Epistle for meeting location.



## Wood-Fired Oven – Updates!

There have already been two wonderful bread and pizza bake events as of this writing, and there are more to come (see schedule below). Thanks to all who helped with the bake or were part of the eating and enjoying community!

The planning team recently met and discussed further what the mission of this ministry is. We are working on an official statement to give the ministry a sounder foundation. Why do we do this work?

After a wonderful discussion, some very meaningful ideas were shared and some of these will be woven into the final mission statement. A few of these thoughts include:

- An opportunity for fellowship and friendship strengthens our own, “porous walls”.
- A reference to yeast and growth, we learn by extending the Spirit of Hope outward.
- Individual acts of kindness; small things that build from there.
- How do you have hope? Not that we have solutions for the big problems of the world, but we can have small impacts, loaf by loaf or pizza slice by pizza slice.
- A spirit of gratitude and generosity is put into action.

We also invite you to notice the new logo name “**Baking Hope**”. We want to acknowledge the wonderful contribution of new member, Tomi McLellan, for welcoming the invitation to design a logo that would fit a way of representing the Community of Hope Wood-Fired Oven. Look for this on future communication and on the bags that will hold the delicious bread made! **Many, many thanks Tomi!**



**2024 Baking Hope** Schedule      Volunteers welcome and needed!

- January 12-13, 2024
- February 9-10, 2024
- March 8-9, 2024
- April 12-13, 2024

For more information on how you can join in the fun, contact Bryan Kufus at [bkufus462@icloud.com](mailto:bkufus462@icloud.com).

## Treasurer's Report

October 2023 and Year-to-date Income and Expense

	Oct Actual	Oct Budget	Oct Variance	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Variance
General Giving	39,903.00	36,970.00	2,933.00	403,531.90	375,837.00	27,694.90
Rental Income	15,647.50	12,775.50	2,872.00	126,212.89	124,867.00	1,345.89
Total Income	55,550.50	49,745.50	5,805.00	529,744.79	500,704.00	29,040.79
Salary & Benefits	33,434.24	33,782.00	(347.76)	353,795.37	357,958.00	(4,162.63)
Total Expenses	50,401.33	53,644.00	(3,242.67)	563,899.80	564,956.00	(1,056.20)
Net Oper Income	5,149.17	(3,898.50)	9,047.67	(34,155.01)	(64,252.00)	30,096.99

**Monthly Financials** General giving was strong this month at \$39,903. YTD giving is at 107.37% of budgeted revenue. Rental income for October is \$15,647.50 giving us a total income of \$55,550.50. Our net income for the month was \$5,149.17. The monthly expenses came in right where we were expecting them to, with the only exception being an expense for interior repairs at \$1,911.79. As of October 31st, we have \$824,105 in current assets – primarily composed of our checking and savings account of which \$500,035 is in the dedicated accounts. This leaves the church with \$324,070 available as reserves.

**Capital Campaign – Opening Doors** The Opening Doors Capital campaign giving in October was \$5,976. We have a total in reserves of \$214,928. Please reach out to Nathan Obrestad ([nathano@ulch.org](mailto:nathano@ulch.org)) or myself if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for continuing to support the Capital Campaign.

**Budget 2024** The Vision and Governance board is working hard to prepare a budget for the new calendar year. Thank you to everyone who has turned in a pledge. If you have not done so yet, please prayerfully considered your pledge for the coming calendar year so we can continue the work we are called to do here at Hope.

**Thank You** The Executive Committee alongside the Vision and Governance Board are grateful for all the ways you contribute to University Lutheran Church of Hope. We know financial contributions is just one way of doing that. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns!

Thank you - Betty Schreuder, Treasurer



# The Next Step in our Journey Together

Over the past number of months our congregation has been dreaming and visioning with the Donation Listening Team (Britta Anderson, Liz Brondos Fry, Doug Hartmann, Linda Herman, Sheila Hougen, and Alden Tetlie). With diligence, skill, and aplomb, this team has helped discern where the Spirit might be leading us to use the generous gift given to our congregation. The Vision and Governance Board has also continued to reflect on the donor's statement:

*"We would not want the donation to be given away to a charity chosen by Hope leadership. We agreed strongly that we want the money to strengthen the Hope congregation and/or infrastructure. We wanted to strengthen Hope inwardly so that our community is better able to reach out in love to the wider community later. We wanted Hope to be a 'draw' in the University and southeast communities."*

Using the insights and data from the Listening Team, and in an effort to focus our energies as a congregation, the Vision and Governance Board has honed in on four areas for further exploration:

1. **Hospitality Spaces (Kitchenette/Lounge/Patio/Courtyard).** Vision and Governance liaisons Deb Bordsen, Sheila Hougen, and Pastor Jen. This group will focus on envisioning what different spaces might look like for the congregation, students, and community. It might go on field trips to look at what other faith groups or organizations have done, as well as potentially consulting with groups for designs.
2. **Wellness.** Vision and Governance liaisons Ann Agrimson, Jacob Lanthier, and Pastor Maria. This group will be more concerned with the programs that might happen in these or other space(s). Themes that have emerged for this are as varied as mental health care, yoga, study space, sober space, spiritual direction, meditation space, and Wild Church, among others. This group will engage in dialogue with other groups that are doing similar work and look for opportunities for potential partnerships, as well as having a keen listening ear to the congregation and neighborhood as to their desires, hopes, and dreams.
3. **Themed Programming - art/music/dialogue/projects.** Vision and Governance liaisons Paul Odenbach and Paige Whitney. This multi-dimensional group will explore using some of the gift for a program around a theme, potentially over a set period of time, and might utilize such varied methods as art, music, structured conversations and/or speakers. It might also envision having projects or activities structured around these themes that might be time bound (for instance, run on a schedule and then shift to the next theme).
4. **Interior/Exterior Building Projects.** Vision and Governance liaison Paul Odenbach. This group will focus on using some of the gift for the infrastructure of our building and/or enhancing capabilities to live out our mission. Themes that have emerged include technology upgrades to allow for specific programming, potential security upgrades, painting/lighting, and a number of others.

Clearly, none of these groups are totally independent from the others. There is overlap in many areas. There are also themes that are carried across all of the groups (social justice issues, for example). The liaison assigned to whichever group you choose will help organize these groups. The Donation Listening Team has organized the ideas suggested so far by the congregation, and the Vision and Governance Board has done a fair bit of work digging into each of these areas. The exploration groups are tasked with further elucidating and bringing to life the goals of each group. Each group will give a "progress report" in March to the Vision and Governance Board. It would seem likely that some groups will still be in their "gathering of particulars phase", whereas others may have some particulars hammered out, ready to come to fruition.

**Which of these areas of further exploration excite you the most?**

**Use this link (<https://forms.gle/t2V2PCpbwpD67riv5>) to express your interest in one of these groups.**

**Your energy and passion are needed!**

It's time for digging in and learning more. It's time for consulting, taking some field trips, seeing how others have done things and continuing to listen for the Spirit.

Paul Odenbach, Congregational President

# ULCH Women's Retreat January 19-21, 2024

## Theme: "Rhapsody of Rest" Reflections on Joy and Gratitude

**Invitation:** Women of all ages are welcome to join us for a restful weekend of reflection, sharing, learning, and building community. We will have a labyrinth available again, set up in the Dunrovin chapel!

**Location:** Dunrovin Christian Brothers Retreat Center, Marine on St Croix, MN

**Registration:** Beginning Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>, use this link to the [Registration Form](#) or find it in the Thursday Epistle, or on the University Lutheran Church of Hope website under "Community: Recreation and Retreats." Register and sign-up in-person at the Welcome Center starting Dec. 10<sup>th</sup>. Deadline is January 7<sup>th</sup>. Sorry, no refunds! Return your Registration to the Welcome Center, or email to Ann at [spirit.beane@gmail.com](mailto:spirit.beane@gmail.com)

**Note:** *Our Registration Commitment to Dunrovin: We have made a commitment to the facility for a minimum of 20 participants for the entire weekend (this includes a 15% non-profit discount).*

Given feedback from last year, we will be offering 2 payment options for the Friday-Sunday attendees only: 1) full price or 2) with a small discount using available ULCH Retreat funds. Scholarship money IS available. We don't want the cost to discourage anyone! Please contact Pastor Jen - [jenn@ulch.org](mailto:jenn@ulch.org)

### Costs:

- Friday-Sunday, with five meals D/B/L/D/B: \$352 (full price) or \$302 (discounted price)
- Saturday - Sunday with 3 meals L/D/B: \$175
- Saturday Only with lunch and/or dinner: \$75

**Retreat Schedule:** Friday night is devoted to just being together in community, with no agenda. Check-in starts at 4 p.m. On Saturday morning, we come together from 9-12:30 to explore the theme, with time for reflection and discussion. The rest of the day Saturday is yours to spend as you wish. There are opportunities for massage, hiking, cross country skiing (weather permitting), crafting, and yoga later Saturday night. We conclude on Sunday morning with a short worship service and to say our "Goodbyes and Godspeed" by 12 noon.

**Prayer Shawls:** At the retreat and throughout the year, we create prayer shawls for the Compassion Care Ministry Team. Up until now, we have used fleece material, but a change is coming. Due to the environmental concern for the micro plastics found in fleece, we'll be switching to cotton flannel when we have used up the fleece we have on hand. Fabric and instructions can always be found in the bins in the coat room near the Welcome Center.

**ULCH Updated Health & Safety Policy:** <https://www.ulch.org/health-and-wellness>, we'll update if needed.

**Questions?** Ann Beane, [spirit.beane@gmail.com](mailto:spirit.beane@gmail.com) or Beáta Rydeen, [beatarydeen@comcast.net](mailto:beatarydeen@comcast.net)

## Upcoming Book Study with Grace University Lutheran

You are invited to a 3-session book study on *The Land Is Not Empty: Following Jesus in Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery* by **Sarah Augustine** in partnership with our friends from Grace University Lutheran Church. The author shows us how the Christian Doctrine of Discovery we learned about in history class is the primary framework that **continues** to define life for Indigenous Peoples around the world. We will meet on **Mondays, January 17, 24, and 31 from 7:00-8:15 p.m. on Zoom**. All are encouraged to acquire and read the book ahead of the study. Contact Pr. Maria ([mariaa@ulch.org](mailto:mariaa@ulch.org)) or Brian McCaffrey ([brianmccaffr@gmail.com](mailto:brianmccaffr@gmail.com)) with questions.

## Save the Date...

Night Songs - Friday, February 9

Annual Congregational Meeting - Sunday, February 11, after worship

# December 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					<b>1</b> 11:00am - 1:00pm Woodwind trio rehearsal	<b>2</b> 11:00am - 12:30pm Bach cantata orchestra and soloists rehearsal
<b>3</b> <b>Advent Begins</b> <b>Cantata During Worship</b> 9:00am - 10:30am Choir rehearsal 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children Gathering 9:30am - 10:20am Sunday Forum Heritage Hall and Zoom 9:30am - 10:15am Sunday School <b>10:30am - 11:30am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube</b> 11:30am - 12:00pm Fellowship after Worship 1:00pm - 2:00pm LCM Q Bible Study 1:30pm - 3:30pm Sound Mind Project Concert 2 p.m. (setup starting 12:30pm)	<b>4</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 11:00am - 1:00pm Woodwind trio rehearsal 6:00pm - 7:00pm Capital Campaign Team 6:00pm - 8:00pm Parents of PEASE support group 7:00pm - 8:30pm ACTION Project ULCH Cohort Meeting	<b>5</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 3:00pm - 7:00pm Facilities Projects 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:15pm Personnel Committee 7:15pm - 8:30pm Executive Committee	<b>6</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 5:30pm - 7:00pm Compassion Care <b>7:00pm - 7:30pm</b> <b>Advent Service</b> 7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>7</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 10:00am Concordia Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:00pm - 8:00pm Parents of PEASE 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 7:00pm - 8:30pm Men of Hope	<b>8</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 7:00pm - 10:00pm Craft Group	<b>9</b> 2:00pm - 4:00pm St. David's Tea Society 2:00pm - 4:00pm Woodwind trio rehearsal
<b>10</b> 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children Gathering 9:30am - 10:30am Sing with the Choir rehearsal 9:30am - 10:20am Sunday Forum Heritage Hall and Zoom 9:30am - 10:15am Sunday School <b>10:30am - 11:30am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube</b> 11:30am - 12:00pm Fellowship after Worship 12:00pm - 2:30pm Confirmation Mini Retreat 2:00pm - 4:00pm TCB Meeting 7:00pm - 8:00pm Book Club on Zoom	<b>11</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 2:00pm - 4:00pm Woodwind trio rehearsal	<b>12</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 3:00pm - 7:00pm Facilities Projects 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program <b>7:30pm - 8:30pm Music Series: Woodwind Trio Recital with Basil Reeve, Barb Leibundguth, and Robert Ragoonanan</b>	<b>13</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 2:00pm - 4:00pm Ted Olsen rehearsal 6:00pm - 8:00pm Facilities Team <b>7:00pm - 7:30pm</b> <b>Advent Service</b> 7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>14</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:30am - 11:30am Dorcas Circle 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 7:30pm - 8:30pm Children's Ministry Team	<b>15</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm The Visitor Articles Due 5:00pm - 9:30pm PEASE Dance	<b>16</b> 8:00am - 12:00pm Private Kitchen Session
<b>17</b> Intergenerational Lessons and Carols 9:30am - 10:30am Choir rehearsal 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children Gathering 9:30am - 10:20am Sunday Forum Heritage Hall and Zoom 9:30am - 10:15am Sunday School <b>10:30am - 11:30am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube</b> 11:30am - 12:00pm Fellowship after Worship <b>11:30am - 1:00pm Smorgasbord Potluck - Fellowship Meal</b> 12:00pm - 1:00pm Caroling 7:00pm - 8:30pm Gather Young Adult Event at Grace University Lutheran Church	<b>18</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 9:00am - 1:00pm Quilters 7:00pm - 9:00pm ACTION Project 2nd Year Plenary	<b>19</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 11:00am - 12:00pm Staff Meeting 3:00pm - 7:00pm Facilities Projects 4:00pm - 5:30pm Sanctuary Coalition Meeting 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 8:00pm Vision & Governance Board	<b>20</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 12:30pm - 2:00pm Hope Diamonds <b>7:00pm - 7:30pm</b> <b>Advent Service</b> 7:00pm - 9:00pm Amnicon Community Campfire Convo 7:30pm - 9:00pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>21</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group 7:00pm - 8:30pm Men of Hope	<b>22</b> Office Hours 9am-2pm PEASE last day before winter break back January 5th.	<b>23</b>
<b>24</b> 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children Gathering <b>10:30am - 11:30am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube</b> 11:30am - 12:00pm Fellowship after Worship <b>3:30pm - 4:00pm Christmas Eve Prelude</b> <b>4:00pm - 5:00pm Christmas Eve Worship in Sanctuary, w/ YouTube and possibly Zoom</b>	<b>25</b> Christmas Holiday - Office Closed	<b>26</b> 3:00pm - 7:00pm Facilities Projects 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 7:00pm - 8:30pm Racial Justice Team	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 4:30pm - 8:30pm PEASE After School Program 6:30pm - 7:30pm AA Group	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>31</b> 9:30am - 10:15am Families with Young Children Gathering <b>10:30am - 11:30am Worship in Sanctuary, w/ Zoom/YouTube</b> 11:30am - 12:00pm Fellowship after Worship						



University Lutheran Church of Hope is a welcoming Christian community of faith centered in God's grace  
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